

REMARKS

In the last Office Action, claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Kancko (U.S. Patent No. 5,959,861). Claims 2-4 and 6 were allowed, and claims 8-9 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim and were otherwise indicated to be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

In accordance with this amendment, independent claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of allowable dependent claim 8, and claim 8 has been canceled. Claim 9 has been amended to depend on claim 1 rather than now-canceled claim 8.

As a result of these amendments, the application currently contains allowable claim 1, allowed claims 2-4 and 6, and allowable claim 9 that depends on allowable base claim 1.

Claim 8 has been canceled, and claims 5 and 7 were previously canceled.

As only allowed and allowable claims remain pending, the application is now believed to be in condition for allowance. Moreover, the amendments made herein do not raise any new issue that would require further search or consideration. To the contrary, the amendments made herein

do, on their face, place the application in condition for allowance. However, should the Examiner determine that something further need be done to place the application in allowable form, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner telephone the undersigned attorney whereupon any outstanding matter will be promptly attended to.

In view of the foregoing, favorable reconsideration and entry of this amendment together with passage of the application to issue are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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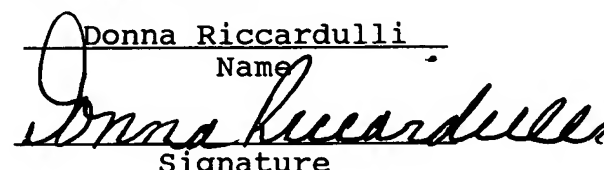
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MAILING CERTIFICATE

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